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SIPDIS

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SUBJECT: EU EXPANSION AMBASSADOR: PRO-TURKEY, DOUBTFUL ON
FRANCE-GERMANY-SPAIN TRIAD

Classified By: Kathleen Fitzpatrick, Political Counselor, for Reasons 1
.4 (b) and (d)

1. (C) We met with Ambassador Jorge Fuentes, MFA Ambassador on Special Mission for EU Enlargement, on May 28 to discuss Spanish foreign policy inside the EU and the GOS's view on further enlargement. Fuentes agreed with our assessment that with the EU Parliamentary elections coming so soon after the March general elections, the new Socialist government was still in campaign mode. He said he believed that after the June 13 EU elections, the Socialists could begin tackling issues and ease up on the anti-US rhetoric. He predicted that the Socialists would win a comfortable victory in the EU elections, but that the Popular Party (PP) could close the margin significantly if the PP could bring the lead Socialist candidate's past (Josep Borrell, who withdrew as a candidate for the Socialist presidential nomination in 1999 due to associates implicated in financial corruption) into the forefront.

2. (C) When asked about the efforts of President Zapatero to return Spain to "the core of Europe" and the press accounts of French President Chirac offering to bring Spain into the French-German alliance, Fuentes replied that "nobody enters the French-German alliance". He noted that other nations have been brought in briefly for specific purposes, mentioning Poland, Italy and the UK, but that all "ended up on the street". He stated his opinion that Spain would have to look out for its own interests in the EU, but that he did not know if the Zapatero administration sees that yet.

3. (C) Regarding the negotiations on the EU Constitution, Fuentes said that Spain would press to get the double majority requirements increased from the current 50% of countries and 60% of population to "55% or so of countries and around 62% of population". He said he recognizes that the French would not accept the 66% of population proposal floated earlier by Spain and other members. When asked about the Aznar administration's alliance with Poland inside the EU, Fuentes stated that the strategic alliance with Poland was "artificial to begin with", and that aside from some preferential agreements committed to under Aznar, the Zapatero administration would not have any huge bonds with Poland.

4. (C) Fuentes is a proponent of Turkish admission to the EU (giving an explanation of his position in a speech to the Navy League here in Madrid), and he said that Spain favors offering EU accession talks to Turkey. However, he said that the EU is not likely to make such an offer due to French and German objections.

ARGYROS